

# 2002 Wetlands Reserve Program

## Customer Focus:

Landowner Ed Brown of Norway, South Carolina, in Orangeburg County, could not help but notice the beautiful restored wetlands surrounding his land. Two landowners adjacent to Brown entered land into the WRP. As a result, hundreds of acres of valuable land were restored back to wetlands. These areas provide floodwater storage, wildlife habitat, sediment and pollutant trapping, and recreational opportunities.

Brown contacted Orangeburg NRCS District Conservationist Bethel DuRant who sold Brown on entering 558 acres into WRP. A wetland restoration plan was developed with NRCS assistance.

“WRP has allowed me to return this land back to its original state and it will in turn benefit wildlife and water quality,” commented Brown. DuRant worked with Brown to put his land into a 30-year WRP easement. “Converting this land back to its original hydrology is the best use of the area. Leaving it natural is also beneficial for wildlife and water quality, too,” he commented.

## South Carolina Summary

### Overview

The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to eligible landowners to restore, enhance, and protect wetlands. Landowners have the option of enrolling eligible lands through permanent easements, 30-year easements and restoration cost-share agreements.

WRP has generated great interest in South Carolina. In FY 2002, WRP payments were made to landowners to acquire easements on over 8,000 acres. Nearly \$10 million of cost share assistance was provided to restore wetland conditions on these lands.

### Accomplishments

Over the past six years, more than 21,000 acres in South Carolina have been enrolled in WRP.

### Program Benefits

Many of the WRP projects in the State have been specifically designed to provide educational opportunities for South Carolina’s children. Through partnerships with Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD’s), the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism (PRT), and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), NRCS has been able to create large outdoor educational classrooms to introduce both children and adults to the wonders of wetlands.

### State Contact

Ronald Hilliard, Assistant State Conservationist for Programs, (803) 765-5681.



*Landowner Ed Brown (right) discusses the details of wetland restoration with NRCS District Conservationist Bethel DuRant.*

## WRP South Carolina Dollars and Contracts

Congressional Districts	Fiscal Year 2002		Cumulative Total (97-02)	
	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts	Obligated Dollars	Number of Contracts
District 1	\$741,000	3	\$1,794,500	13
District 2	534,397	3	2,236,397	18
District 3	100,000	1	485,000	12
District 4	75,000	1	75,000	1
District 5	2,140,000	3	3,547,500	16
District 6	6,709,000	10	13,509,000	36
State Totals	\$10,299,397	21	\$21,647,357	96

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